the money in the safe?"

"Prosper is honest."

FILE NO. 113.

ONE OF THE MYSTERIES OF PARIS, AND HOW IT WAS SOLVED.

SIMPLE GABORIAU

CHAPTER XIX.

Clameran's last injunction to Racul "Be very cautious when you enter

the room; your appearance must tell everything, so you can avoid preliminary explanations." The recommendation was useless.

The instant that Raoul went into the little salon, the sight of his pale, haggard face and wild eyes caused Mme. Fauvel to spring up with clasped hands, and cry out:

"Raoul, what has happened? Speak,

my son!" The sound of her tender, affection ate voice acted like an electric shock upon the young bandit. He shook like a leaf. But, at the same time, his mind seemed to change. Louis was not mistaken in his estimate of his companion's character. Raoul was on the stage; his part was to be played; his assurance returned to him; his cheating, leing nature assumed the ascendant, and stifled any better feeling his heart.

"This misfortune is the last I shall ever suffer, mother!"

Mme. Fauvel rushed toward him, and, seizing his hand, gazed search ingly into his eyes, as if to read his very soul.

"What is the matter? Reoul, my dear son, do tell me what troubles

He gently pushed her from him. "The matter is, my mother," he

said, in a voice of heartbroken despair. "that I am an unworthy, degenerate con! Unworthy of you, unworthy of my noble father!"

She tried to comfort him by saying that his errors were all her fault, and that he was, in spite of all, the pride of her heart.

"Alas!" he said, "I know and judge yself. No one can reproach me for my infamous conduct more bitterly ann does my own conscience. I am not naturally wicked, but only a miserable fool. At times I am like an insane man, and am not responsible for my actions. Ah, my dear mother, I would not be what I am, if you had watched over my childhood. But brought up among strangers, with no guide but my own evil passions, noth ing to restrain me, no one to advise me, no one to love me, owning nothing, not even my stolen name, am cursed with vanity and unbounded ambition. Poor, with no one to as

"Alas for me! When I found you the evil was done. Your affection your maternal love, the only true happiness of my life, could not save me. I, who had suffered so much, endured so many privations, even the pangs of hunger, became spoiled by this new life of luxury and pleasure which you opened before me. I rushed headlong into extravagance, as a drunkard long deprived of liquor seizes and drains to the dregs the first bottle in his reach.'

sist me but you, I have the tastes and

vices of a millionaire's son-

Mme. Fauvel listened, silent and terrified, to these words of despair and remorse, which Raoul uttered with vehemence.

She dared felt certain some dreadful piece of news was coming.

Raoul continued in a sad, hopeless

"Yes, I have been a weak fool. Happiness was within my reach, and I my hand and grasp it. I rejected a went out-" heavenly reality to eagerly pursue a vain phantom. I, who ought to have spent my life at your feet, and daily striven to express my gratitude for your lavish kinduess, have made you unhappy, destroyed your peace of mind, and instead of being a blessing, I have been a curse ever since the first fatal day you welcomed me to your kind heart. Ah, unfeeling brute that I was, to squander upon creatures whom I despised, a fortune, of which each gold piece must have cost you a tear! Too late, too late! With you,

He stopped, as if overcome by the conviction of his evil deeds, and seemed as if about to burst into

"It is never too late to repent, my son," murmured Mme. Fauvel, in com forting tones.

"Ah, if I only could!" cried Raoul; "but no; it is too late! Besides, can I tell how long my good resolution: will last? This is not the first tim that I have condemned myself pitilessly. Stinging remorse for each new fault made me swear to lead a better life, to sin no more. What was the result of these periodical repentances! At the first temptation I for got my remorse and good resolu tions. I am weak and mean-spirited, and you are not firm enough to govern my vacillating nature. While my intentions are good, my actions are villainous. The disproportion between my extravagant desires, and the means of gratifying them, is too great for me to endure any longer, Who knows to what fearful length my unfortunate disposition may lead me? However, I will take my fate in my own hands!" he finally said, with a reckless laugh.

"Oh, Raoul! my dear son!" eried Mme. Fauvel, in an agony of terror, "explain these dreadful words. Am I not your mother? Tell me what distresses you; I am ready to hear the worst.

He appeared to hesitate, as if afraid to crush his mother's heart by the terrible blow he was about to in flict. Then in a voice of gloomy despair he replied:

"I am ruined!"

"Ruined?" more to expect or hope for. I am dis- Raoul had no honored; and all through my own what it was.

fault; no one is to blame but myself.

"Raoul!"

"It is the sad truth, my poor mothr; but fear nothing, I shall not trail n the dust the name which you betowed upon me I will at least have the courage not to survive my disnonor. Come, mother; don't pity me, or distress yourself; I am one of hose miserable beings fated to find no peace save in the arms of death. came into the world with misforune stamped upon my brow. Was not my birth a shame and disgrace to ou? Did not the memory of my exstence haunt you day and night, fillng your soul with remorse? And now, when I am restored to you after many years' separation, do I not prove to be a bitter curse, instead of a blessing?"

"Ungrateful boy! Have I ever reproached you?"

"Never! Your poor Raoul will die with your beloved name on his lips; his last words a prayer to Heaven to eap blessings upon your head, and eward your long-suffering devotion." "Die! You die, my son?"

"It must be, my dear mother; hono ampels it. I am condemned by judges rom whose decision no appeal can be aken-my conscience and my will."

An hour ago Mme. Fauvel would have sworn that Raoul had made her uffer all the torments that a woman ould endure; but now she felt that all her former troubles were nothing compared with her present agrony.

"My God! Raoul, what have you been doing?" she gasped. "Money was intrusted to me;

gambled, and lost it." "Was it a large sum?"

"No; but more than you can replace. My poor mother, have I not taken everything from you? Did you not give me your last jewel?"

"But Monsieur de Clameran is rich. He placed his fortune at my disposal I will order the carriage and go to him."

"But Monsieur de Clameran is ab sent, and will not return to Paris until next week; and if I do not have the money this evening I am lost. Alas! I have thought deeply, and, although it is hard to die so young, still, fate wills it so."

He pulled a pistol from his pocket, and, with a forced smile, said: "This will settle everything."

Mme. Fauvel was too excited and frightened to reflect upon the horror of Raoul's behavior, and that these wild threats were a last resort for obtain ing money. Forgetful of the past, careless of the future, her every thought concentrated upon the presthat her son was about to commit suicide, and that she was powerless to prevent the fearful deed.

"Ah, wait a little while, my son!" she eried. "Andre will soon return home, and I will ask him to give me How much did you lose "Thirty thousand francs."

"You shall have them to-morrow. "But I must have the money tonight."

Mme. Fauvel wrung her hands in "Oh! why did you not come to me

ooner, my son? Why did you not have confidence enough in me to come at once for help? This evening? There is no one in the house to open the money safe; if it were not for thathad not the sense to stretch forth if you had only come before Andre "The safe!" cried Raoul with sud-

den joy, as if this magic word had thrown a ray of light upon his dark despair; "do you know where the key "Yes; it is in the next room."

"Well!" he exclaimed, with a bold look that caused Mme. Fauvel to low er her eyes and keep silent. "Give me the key, mother," he said

in a tone of entreaty. "Oh, Raoul, Raoul!" "It is my life I am asking of you."

words decided her; she These I might have been a good and happy snatched up a candle, rushed into her chamber, opened the secretary, and took out M. Fauvel's key.

But, when about to hand it to Raoul, she seemed suddenly to see the normity of what she was doing.

"Oh, Raoul! my son," she murnured, "I can not! Do not ask me to ommit such a dreadful deed!" He said nothing, but sadly turned

to leave the room; then, coming back to his mother, said: "Ah, well; it makes but little difference in the end! At least you will rive me one last kiss, before we part

forever, my darling mother!" "What could you do with the key, Raoul?" interrupted Mme. Fauvel.

the buttons." "No; but I can try to open it without moving the buttons."

"You know that money is never kept in the safe over night."

"Nevertheless, I can make the atmoney in it, it will be a miracle, show ing that Heaven has pitied my misfortunes and provided relief."

"And if you are not successful will row, to do nothing rash to-night?" "I will swear it, by my father's

"Then take the key and follow me."

CHAPTER XX.

Pale and trembling, Raoul and Mme. Fauvel passed through the banker's study, and down the narrow staircase leading to the offices and cashroom below.

Raoul walked in front, holding the light, and the key of the safe.

Mme. Fauvel was convinced that it would be utterly impossible to open the safe, as the key was useless with-"Yes, ruined; and I have nothing out the secret word, and, of course, Raoul had no way of discovering

Even granting that some chance had revealed the secret to him, he do not know Prosuer and I arranged would find but little in the safe, since this little affair together, and that he the height of absurdity. He had come everything was deposited in the Bank is to have half the booty?" of France. Everyone knew that no large sum was ever kept in the safe after banking hours.

The only anxiety she felt was, how Raoul would bear the disappointment, how she could calm his despair.

She thought that she would gain time by letting Raoul try the key; and then, when he could not open the safe, he would keep his promise, and wait until the next day. There was surely no harm in letting him try the lock, when he could not touch the

"When he sees there is no chance of success," she thought, "he will listen to my entreaties; and to-morrow

What she would do to-morrow she knew not; she did not even ask herself. But in extreme situations the least delay inspires hope, as if a short respite meant sure salvation.

The condemned man, at the last moment, begs for a reprieve of a day, an hour, a few seconds. Raoul was about to kill himself; his mother prayed to God to grant her one day, not even a day, one night; as if in this space of time some unexpected relief would ome to end her misery.

They reached Prosper's office, and Raoul placed the light on a high stool, so that it lighted the whole room.

He then summoned up all his coolness, or rather that mechanical precision of movement, almost independent of will, of which men accustomed to peril avail themselves time of need.

Rapidly, with the dexterity of experience, he slipped the buttons on the five letters composing the name of G, i, p, s, y.

His features during this short operation, expressed the most intense anxiety. He was fearful that his nervous energy might give out; of not finding the money there when he beneath this last terrible shock. opened it; of Prosper having changed ed to leave the money in the safe.

Mme. Fauvel saw these visible apends by persuading himself that his arrested; he expects that, and is pre stacles.

Having often been present when Prosper was preparing to leave his ately." having a practical turn of mind, and her. an eye to the future, he had even eral occasions while waiting for Pros- have killed me."

Fauvel could hear its throbs. The word had not been changed;

the safe opened. Raoul and his mother simultaneous triumph.

Heaven's sake! Raoul!" Raoul's arm, and pulled him away so the house. abruptly, that the key was dragged At the restaurant, in the room from the lock, and, slipping along the where they had dined, Clameran, tor glossy varnish of the safe door, made tured by anxiety, awaited his accoma deep scratch some inches long.

But at a glance Raoul discovered, He the upper shelf of the safe, four bundles of bank notes. He snatched Raoul would prove a coward, and re slipped them inside his vest.

Exhausted by the effort she had just made, Mme. Fauvel dropped Ra- they depart before M. Fauvel's reoul's arm, and, almost fainting with turn from the dinner party? "Have mercy, Raoul!" she moaned.

you twice as much to-morrow. Oh, my could scarcely gasp out: son, have pity on your unhappy moth-

He paid no attention to these words the scratch on the safe. He was all earth." most alarmed at this trace of the rob- He unbuttoned his vest, and, pull bery, which it was impossible for him, ing out the four bundles of bank to cover up.

"At least, you will not take all," said Mme. Fauvel; "just keep enough disgust: to save yourself, and put back the

rest. covery will be made that the safe has ple. been opened; so I might as well take

all as a part." "Oh, no! not at all. I can account to Andre; I will tell him I had a press ing need for a certain sum, and open- of the reality of success. ed the safe to g t it."

In the meant ne Raoul had care- excitedly. fully closed the safe. "Come, mother, let us go back to the sitting-room, A servant might go there to look for you, and be aston

ished at our absence." Raoul's cruel indifference and cold calculation at such a moment filled Mme. Fauvel with indignation. She You do not know the secret word of saw that she had no influence over her son, that her prayers and tears

had no effect upon his hard heart. "Let them be astonished," she cried; "let them come here and find us. I will be relieved to put an end to this tissue of crime. Then Andre will know tempt. If I open the safe and find all, and drive me from his house. Let come what will. I shall not sacrifice another victim. Prosper will be ac cused of this theft to-morrow. Clameran defrauded him of the woman you promise me to wait until to-mor- he loved, and now you would deprive him of his honor! I will have nothing

to do with so base a crime.' She spoke so loud and angrily that Raoul was alarmed. He knew that the errand boy slept in a room close by, and might be in bed listening to her, although it was early in the evening. "Come upstairs," he said, seizing Mme. Fauvel's arm.

But she clung to a table, and re fused to move a step. "I have been cowardly enough to sacrifice Madeleine," she said, "but I will not ruin Prosper."

Raoul had an argument in reserve which he knew would make Mme. Fauvel submit to his will. "Now, really," he said, with a cyn-

"Of course, he is, and so am I, too. of to-night. You can do what you The only thing is that we both need "You are telling a falsehood, Ra-"Upon my soul I am not. Madeleine

ical laugh, "do you pretend that you

"Impossible! I will never believe such a thing of Prosper!"

rejected Prosper, and the poor fellow

has to console himself for her cruel ty; and these sorts of consolations are expensive, my good mother." He took up the candle, and gently but firmly led Mme. Fauvel toward the staircase.

She mechanically allowed herself to be led along, more bewildered by what she had just heard than she was at the opening of the safe door.
"What!" she gasped, "can Prosper

be a thief?" She began to think herself the vic tim of a terrible nightmare, and that, the horrors of her present situation; when she waked, her mind would be relieved of this intolerable torture. She helplessly clung to Raoul's arm as he helped her up the narrow little

staircase. "You must put the key back in the secretary," said Raoul, as soon as they were in the chamber again.

But she did not seem to hear him; so he went and replaced the safe-key in the place from which he had seen her take it.

He then led, or rather carried, Mme Fauvel into the little sitting-room and placed her in an easy chair.

The set, expressionless look of the wretched woman's eyes, and her dazed manner, frightened Rooul, who thought that she had lost her mind being able to open the safe; of not that her reason had finally given way

"Come, cheer up, my dear mother," the word; or perhaps having neglect- he said, in coaxing tones, as he rubbed her icy hands, "you have saved my life, and rendered an immense prehensions with alarm. She read in service to Prosper. Don't be alarmed; his eyes that wild hope of a man, everything will come out right in the who, passionately desiring an object, end. Prosper will be accused, perhaps own will suffices to overcome all ob pared for it; he will deny his culpability; and, as there is no proof against him, he will be set at liberty immedi-

amount of money in the safe, which, office, Raoul had fifty times seen him | But these falschoods were wasted move the buttons and lock the safe, on Mine. Fauvel, who was incapable by order of the banker, was to be aljust before leaving the bank. Indeed, of understanding anything said to ways left empty at night? a life of extravagance and dissipa-

"Raoul," she mouned, in a brokentried to lock the safe himself on sev- hearted tone. "Raoul, my son, you tion, she thought it very likely he had, from sheer desperation, resorted to this bold step to pay his debts; her Her gentle voice, kind even in its He inserted the key softly, turned despairing accents, touched the very

blind affection, moreover, made her it around: pushed it further in, and bottom of Raoul's perverted heart, turned it a second time; then thrust and once more his soul was wrung by it in suddenly, and turned it again. remorse; so that he felt inclined to His heart beat so loudly that Mme. put back the stolen money, and comfort the despairing woman whose life and reason he was destroying. The thought of Clameran restrained him.

Finding his efforts to restore Mme ly uttered a cry; she of terror; he of Fauvel fruitless; that, in spite of all his affectionate regrets and prom-"Shut it again!" cried Mme. Fauvel, ises, she still sat silent, motionless frightened at the incomprehensible and death-like; and, fearing that M result of Raoul's attempt. "Come Fauvel or Madeleine might enter a away. Don't touch anything, for any moment, and demand an explana tion-he hastily pressed a kiss upor And, half frenzied, she clung to his mother's brow, and hurried from

He wondered if at the last moment when he was not near to sustain him them up with his left hand, and treat; if any unforeseen trifle had prevented his finding the key; if any visitors were there; and, if so, would

emotion, clung to the back of a chair. He had worked himself into such a state of excitement, that, when Ra "I implore you to put back the money, oul returned, he flew to him with and I solemnly swear that I will give ashy face and trembling all over, and

"Well ?" "The deed is done, uncle, thanks to you; and I sm now the most miseraof entreaty, but carefully examined ble, abject villain on the face of the

notes, angrily dashed them upon the table, saying in a tone of scorn and

"Now, I hope, you are satisfied. This is the price of the happiness, honor, "What good would that do? The dis- and perhaps the life, of three peo-

Clameran paid no attention to these angry words. With feverish eagerness he seized the notes, and rattled then in his hand, as if to convince himself

"Now Madeleine is mine!" he cried,

Raoul looked at Clameran in silent disgust. This exhibition of joy was a shocking contrast to the scene in which he had just been an actor. He was humiliated at being the tool of such a heartless scoundrel as he now knew Clameran to be.

Louis misinterpreted this silence, and said, gayly: "Did you have much difficulty?" "I forbid you ever to allude to this

evening's work," cried Raoul, fiercely. Do you hear me? I wish to forget Clameran shrugged his shoulders at

this outburst of anger, and said in a

bantering tone: "Just as you please, my handsons nephew; I rather think you will want to remember it, though, when I offer you these 350,000 francs. You will not, I am sure, refuse to accept them as a slight souvenir. Take them; they

leine, who had just left her, rushed This generosity seemed neitner to nto the room. surprise nor satisfy Raoul. The white face and wild eyes of the "According to our agreement," he poor girl told Mme. Fauvel that the crime was discovered. "Do you know what has happened,

said, suddenly, "I was to have more than this " "Of course; this is only part of your aunt?

are yours."

corrified tone. "Prosper is accused of share." "And when am I to have the rest, obbery, and the police have come to if you please?" take him to prison!" "The day I marry Madeleine, and A groan was Mme. Fauvel's only not before, my boy. You are too answer.

valuable an assistant to lose at pres-"Raoul or the marquis is at the ent; and you know that, though I bottom of this," continued Madeleine, den't distrust you, I am not altogethexcitedly. er sure of your sincere affection for "How can they be concerned in it,

"I can't tell yet; but I only know Raoul reflected that to commit a that Prosper is innocent. I have just seen him, spoken to him. He would sever have looked me in the face had with the intention of breaking off all he been guilty." connection with Clameran; but he now determined that he would not

on account; but, remember, I will nev-

er do another piece of work like this

"That is sensible; now that you are

CHAPTER XXL

tenderness, and had speculated upor

with horror the idea that the cashier

was the instigator of the crime; but

in spite of herself, it constantly re-

curred. And finally she felt convinced

that what Raoul said must be true;

for who but Prosper could have be-

trayed the word? and who but Pros-

Knowing that Prosper was leading

one rather than to her darling son.

erishes men, and whose evil influence

knew, from her own sad experience

to what depths even one fault car

lead. Although she believed Prosper

guilty, she did not blame him, but

aped any questions from her niece.

Her calmness never left her when

M. Fauvel and Lucien returned, al-

hough she was in terror lest her hus

and should go down to the cash-

oom to see that everything was safe-

y locked up. It was not his habit to

nd resort to bad company.

the hours dragged on.

pen? Heaven belp me!"

of the robbery.

lamed the cashier, he would have

een puzzled at their strange expres-

the most intolerable agony. She cou-t-

ed each stroke of the town clock as

"In six hours," she said to herseif.

"in five hours-in four hours-in three

hours-in one hour-and all will be

discovered; and then what will hap-

At sunrise she heard the servants

noving about the house: then the of-

ice shutters opened; then, later, she

eard the clerks going into the bank,

She attempted to get up, but felt

o iil and weak, that she sunk back

n her pillow; and lying there, trem-

bling like a leaf, bathed in cold per-

spiration, she awaited the discovery

in her own breast.

ometimes did so.

She had heard that Prosper was

please; I shall flatly refuse."

and said:

role begins.

of suffering returned.

now struck her forcibly.

in the cashier's complicity.

knowledge.

her fright.

Mme. Fauvel opened her lips to "Why, how do you suppose I dis abandon his accomplice until he had confess all; fear kept her silent. covered the secret word? Who do you been well paid for his services. supposed disobeyed orders and left "Very well," he said, "I accept this

"What can these wretches want?" said Madeleine; "what new sacrifice do they demand? Dishonor Prosper! Good heavens! why did they not kill him at once? He would rather be dead than disgraced!"

Clameran burst into a loud laugh. Here the entrance of M. Fauvel interrupted Madeleine. The banker was so angry that he could scarcely speak, rich, you can afford to be honest. Set "The worthless scoundrel!" your conscience at rest, for I promise eried; "to think of his daring to acuse me! to insinuate that I robbed you I will require nothing more of my own safe! And that Marquis de francs." you save a few trifling services. You Clameran must needs doubt my good can retire behind the scenes now, faith in keeping my engagement to pay his money!" while I appear upon the stage. My

Then, without noticing the effect of his story upon the two women, he proceeded to relate all that had oc-For more than an hour after Racurred downstairs. oul's departure, Mme. Fauvel re-

"I was afraid this extravagance mained in a state of stupor bordering would lead to something terrible," he said, in conclusion; you know I Gradually, however, she recovered told you last night that Prosper was her senses sufficiently to comprehend growing worse in his conduct, and that he would get into trouble." and, with the faculty of thought that

Throughout the day Madeleine's de-The dreadful scene in which she had rotion to her aunt was severely tried. taken part was still before her af-The generous girl saw disgrace frighted vision; all the attending neaped upon the man she loved. She circumstances, unnoticed at the time had perfect faith in his innocence; she felt sure she knew who had laid the trap to ruin him; and yet she could She saw that she had been the dupe ot say a word in his defense. of a shameful conspiracy; that Raoul

Fearing that Madeleine would sus had tortured her with cold-blooded sect her of complicity in the theft, if cruelty, had taken advantage of her she remained in bed and displayed so much agitation, Mme. Fauvel arose and dressed for breakfast. But had Prosper anything to do

with the robbery? This Mmc. Fauvel It was a dreary meal. No one fasted had no way of finding. Ah! Raoul a morsel. The servants moved about knew how the blow would strike when on their tiptoes, as silently as if a he accused Prosper. He knew that death had occurred in the family.

About two o'clock a servant came to Mme. Fauvel would end by believing M. Fauvel's study, and said that the The unhappy woman sat and Marquis de Clameran desired to see thought over every possible way him, in which Raoul could find out "V

"What!" cried the banker, "does he the secret word without Prosdare to-Then, after a moment's reflection, he added:

"Ask him to walk up." The very name of Clameran had sufficed to arouse all the slumbering wrath of M. Fauvel. The victim of a robbery, finding his safe empty at the moment that he was called upon to per could have left so large au make a heavy payment, he had been constrained to conceal his anger and resentment, but now he determined to have his revenge upon his insolent

But the marqu's declined to come with the answer that the gentleman had a particular reason for seeing derstand your insinuation; you need M. Fauvel in the office below, where anxious to attribute the crime to any the clerks were. "What does this fresh impertinence

mean?" cried the banker, as he an-

supporting one of those worthless grily jumped up and hastened downcreatures whose extravagance impov- stairs. M. de Clameran was standing in the perverts their natures. When a young middle of the room adjoining the

cash-room; M. Fauvel walked up to any sin or crime? Alas! Mme. Fauvel him and said, bluntly: "What do you want now, Monsieur": You have been paid your money, and I have your receipt.

To the surprise of all the clerks, considered herself responsible for his and the banker himself, the marquis seemed not in the least offended at Had she not herself banished the this rude greeting, but answered in a poor young man from a fireside which deferential, but not at all humble, laid them on the mantelpiece. he had begun to regard as his own? manner: Had she not destroyed his hopes and happiness by crushing his pure love but I deserve it, and that is why I "You are hard upon me, Monsieur;

for a noble girl, whom he looked up am here. A gen leman always ac ly would I give the rest to insure this on as his future wife, and thus driven knowledges when he is in the wrone. being the last crime committed in this instance I am the offender; was undecided whether to conand I flatter myself that my past will ide in Madeleine or bury the secret permit me to say so without being ccused of cowardice or lack of self-Fatally inspired, she decided to keep respect. I insisted upon seeing you here instead of in your study, be-When Madeleine returned home at cause, having been rude to you in the il o'clock, Mme, Fauvel not only was presence of your clerks, I wished silent as to what had occurred, but them to hear me apologize for my beeven succeeded in so concealing at: traces of her agitation, that she es-

havior of this morning." Clameran's speech was so different from his usual overbearing, haughty conduct, that surprise almost stupe fied the banker, and he could only

"I must say that I was hurt by your doubts, insinuations, suspicions of my honor-"

pen the money safe at night, but he "This morning," continued the marquis, " I was irritated, and thought-As fate would have it, the banker as soon as he entered the room began essly gave way to my temper. Although I am gray-headed, my dispoo speak of Prosper, saying how dis sition is as excitable as that of a fiery ressing it was that so interesting a young man of 20 years; and I hope oung man should be thus throwing you will forget words uttered in a imself away, and wondering what moment of excitement, and now deepould have happened to make him ly regretted." uddenly cease his visits at the house,

M. Fauvel, being a kind-hearted, though quick-tempered man, could ap-If M. Fauvel had looked at the faces preciate Clameran's feelings; and, of his wife and niece while he harshly knowing that his own high reputation for scrupulous honesty could not be affected by any hasty or abusive language uttered by a creditor, at once All night long Mme. Pauvel suffered calmed down before so frank an apology, and holding out his hand to Jameran, said:

"Let us forget what happened, Monsieur."

They conversed in a friendly manner for some minutes, and, after Clameran had explained why he had such pressing need of the money at that particular hour of the morning turned to leave, saying that he would do himself the honor of calling upon Mme. Fauvel during the day.

"That is, if a visit from me would not be considered intrusive," he said, with a shade of hesitation. "Perhaps after the trouble of this morning she does not wish to be disturbed." "Oh, no!" said the banker; "come

She was leaning over the side of the bed, straining her ear to catch a by all means. I think a visit from you sound from the cash-room, when Madwould cheer her mind. I shall be from home all day, trying to trace this un-fortunate affair."

Mme. Fauvel was in the same room where Raoul had threatened to kill himself the night previous; she looked very pale and ill as she lay on a sofa. Madeleine was bathing her forehead. cried Madeleine, in a shrill, When M. de Clameran was anounced they both started up as if a

phantom had appeared before them. Although Louis had been gay and miling when he parted from M. Fauvel downstairs, he now wore a melancholy aspect, as he gravely bowed, and refused to seat himself in the chair which Mme. Fauvel motioned

"You will excuse me, ladies, for intruding at this time of your afflic-tion; but I have a duty to fulfill."

The two women were silent. They eemed to be waiting for him to ex-

plain. He added in an undertone: "I know all." By an imploring gesture Mme. Fauvel tried to stop him. She saw that

he was about to reveal her secret to Madeleine. But Louis would not see this ges ture. He turned his whole attention

to Madeleine, who haughtily said: "Explain yourself, Monsieur." "Only one hour ago," he replied, "I discovered that Raoul last night forced from his mother the key of

the money safe, and stole 350,000

Madeleine crimsoned with shame and indignation. She leaned over the sofa, and seizing her aunt's wrist shook it violently, and in a hollow voice cried:

"It is false, is it not, aunt? Speak!" "Alas! alas!" groaned Mme. Fau-vel. "What have I done?"

"You have allowed Prosper to be accused," cried Madeleine. "You have suffered him to be arrested and disgraced for life." "Forgive me!" sighed Mme, Fauvel.

"He was about to kill himself; I was

so frightened! Then, you know-Prosper was to share the money; he gave Raoul the secret word-"Good heaven! Aunt, how could you believe such a falsehood as that?" Clameran interrupted them.

"Unfortunately, what your aunt says of M. Bertomy is the truth," he said, in a sad tone "Your proofs, Monsieur; where are

your proofs?" "Raoul's confession."

"Raoul is false." "That is only too true; but how did he find out the word, if M. Bertomy did not reveal it? And who left the money in the safe but M. Bertomy?" These arguments had no effect upon

Madeleine. "And now tell me," she said, scornfully, "what became of the money There was no mistaking the significance of these words. They meant:

"You are the instigator of the robbery, and, of course, have possession of the money." This harsh accusation from a girl whom he so passionately loved, when,

up for her sake all the money gained by his crime, so cruelly hurt Clameran that he turned livid. But his mortification and anger did not prevent him from pursuing the part he bad prepared and studied. "A day will come, Mademoiselle." apstairs. The messenger returned he said, "when you will deeply regret

grasping bardit, as he was, he gave

having treated me so cruelly, I unnot attempt to deny it." "I have no idea of denying any

thing, Monsieur." "Madeleine!" remonstrated Mme, Fauvel, who trembled at the rising anger of the man, who held her fate in her hands, "Madeleine, be careful!" "Mademoiselle is pitiless," said Cla-

meran, sadiy. "She cruelly punishes

an honorable man whose only muit

is having obeyed his brother's dying injunctions. And I am here now, because I believe in the joint responsibility of all the members of the fam-Here he slowly drew from his pock

et several bundles of bank notes, and "Raoul stole 350,000 francs," he said. "I return the same amount. It is more than half my fortune. Willing-

him. Too inexperienced to penetrate this bold, yet simple, plan of Clameran's, Madeleine was dumb with astonishment; all her calculations were upset. Mme. Faurel, on the contrary, ac-

cepted this restitution as salvation sent from Heaven. "Oh, thanks; Monsieur; thanks!" she cried, gratefully, clasping Clameran's hand in hers. "You are good-

Louis' eye lit up with pleasure. But he rejoiced too soon. A minute's reflection brought back all of Madeleine's distrust. She thought this magnanimity and generosity unnatural in man whom she considered incapable of a noble sentiment, and at once concluded that it must conceal some snare beneath.

ey?" she demanded. "Restore it to M. Fauvel, Mademo selle." "We restore it, Monsieur, and how? Restoring the money is denouncing

Raoul, and ruining my aunt. Take

back your money, Monsieur. We will

not touch it."

"What are we to do with this mon

Clameran was too shrewd to insist; he took up the money and prepared to leave. "I comprehend your refusal, made moiselle, and must find another way of accomplishing my wish. But, before retiring, let me say that your in-

justice pains me deeply. After the promise you made to me, I had reason to hope for a kinder welcome." "I will keep my promise, monsieur; but not until you have furnished se-

curity." "Security! and for what? Pray ex-plain yourself."

"Something to protect my aunt against the molestations of Raoul after my-marriage. What is to prevent his coming to extort money from his mother after he has squandered my dowry? A man who spends a hundred thousand francs in four months will soon run through my lit-

tle fortune. We are making a bargain; I give you my hand in exchange for the honor and life of my aunt; and, of course, you must give me some guaranty to secure the performance of your promise." "Oh! I will give you ample securi-

ties," cried Clameran; "such as will quiet all your suspicious doubts of my good faith. Alas! you will not believe in my devotion; what shall I do to convince you of its sincerity? shall I try to save Monsieur Bertomy?" Thanks for the offer, monsieur, replied Madeleine, disdainfully. "If

Prosper is guilty, let him be punished by the law; if he is innocent God will

Here Madeleine stood up, to sign